

never heal a heart, but you can provide comfort, knowing that the Federal Government will provide help for those whose houses were destroyed or automobiles were destroyed. And I would strongly urge the citizens here to—if you’ve got a question, to call 1-800-621-FEMA, and there will be somebody answering your call and will give you a chance to find out whether or not you will qualify for the relief under the major disaster declaration.

Secondly, I was talking to the Governor, and he has said that there have been some funds set up to help the people who suffered. And my call to people here in Alabama and around the United States is, if you feel the generosity in your heart to help people affected by this terrible tornado, I would ask you to contribute. One such fund is the Red Cross. There will be others. We will make sure that USA Freedom Corps will have posted on it a place where people can contribute money. Some people are going to need your help. There have been some poor citizens who may or may not qualify for Federal help, but are going to need the help of our fellow citizens. And I would ask you to, out of the generosity of your heart, to help the folks down here.

This storm is a tough storm. It went 8 miles and affected a lot of lives. And this country is a prayerful country; there are a lot of people praying for you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:40 a.m. at Enterprise Municipal Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Kenneth W. Boswell of Enterprise, AL; and Gov. Bob Riley of Alabama.

Remarks Following a Tour of Enterprise High School and an Exchange With Reporters in Enterprise

March 3, 2007

The heart of a community like Enterprise, Alabama, is the schools. And today I have walked through devastation that’s hard to describe. Our thoughts, of course, go out to the students who perished. We thank God for the hundreds who lived. I want the folks of Enterprise to know that to the extent the Government can, our Federal Government

can, in working with the State, we’ll help rebuild the school system—this high school. We can never replace lives, and we can’t heal hearts, except through prayer. And I know—I want the students to know and the families to know that there’s a lot of people praying for them.

I met with the president of the student body, who recognizes that the end of her senior year is going to be difficult. But as a student leader, she will have the opportunity to help people rebuild, and that she will learn that out of the devastation—and her classmates will learn that out of the devastation can come hope and a better tomorrow.

And so we ask for the blessings on the students and their families. We ask for the blessings on the principal and the administrator. We thank this good community for rallying strongly by the side of those who have been affected. And I thank the people of Enterprise for the warm welcome I have received here.

The people of America have got to know that the citizens here, even though affected by devastation, have shown great courage and compassion for their citizens in need. And it’s really part of the strength of the United States to know that there’s such decent folks.

God bless everybody. Thank you all.

Aerial Tour of Areas Damaged by Tornadoes/Recovery

Q. How did it look from the air, sir?

The President. It looks as bad from the air as it looks from the ground. And you can see right here the effects of the storm. But the biggest effect of the storm is the shattered lives. We can rebuild buildings, and the fundamental question is, will the spirit stay strong in Enterprise, Alabama? And I predict that it not only will stay strong; it will be strengthened. That’s my prediction. And it’s easy to tell when you talk to the people, whether it’s young or old, this town refuses to be devastated. This town is a town full of people that will not be—will not succumb to the effects of the storm. The mayor is strong; the principal of the school is strong; the Lieutenant; and the children, the high school seniors.

And so it’s a—these are very tough times for the people here, and there are going to

be tough times for the people in Georgia that were affected. And I just hope they know that a lot of people are praying for them, that a lot of strangers that they'll never have met care for them, and that out of this rubble will emerge a better tomorrow, and that's the commitment that I hear here in Enterprise. And the role of the Government is going to help, to the extent that we can.

All right, thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:24 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Megan Parks, student government association president, and Rick Rainer, principal, Enterprise High School; and Mayor Kenneth W. Boswell of Enterprise, AL.

Remarks to the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Legislative Conference

March 5, 2007

Thank you all. Please be seated—*sientese*. *Buenas tardes*. [Laughter] *Gracias por la bienvenida*. For those of you not from Texas, that means, good afternoon—[laughter]—and thank you for the welcome. I'm honored to be back again with the men and women of the Hispanic Chamber. I appreciate your hospitality.

I'm pleased to report, the economy of the United States is strong, and one of the reasons why is because the entrepreneurial spirit of America is strong. And the entrepreneurial spirit of America is represented in this room.

I thank you for the role of the Chamber. I appreciate so very much the work you do with our banks to help move capital. I appreciate so very much the fact that you recognize outstanding Latina businesswomen through your Anna Maria Arias Fund. I appreciate the fact that you say loud and clear, *el Sueno Americano es para todos*.

I strongly believe that the role of government is to make it clear that America is the land of opportunity. I think the best way to do that is to encourage business formation, encourage ownership, is to say, if you work hard and dream big, you can realize your dreams here in America. I also believe it's essential to make sure that when people take risk, that they're able to keep more of their own taxes. Congress needs to make the tax

cuts we passed a permanent part of the Tax Code.

I know that in order for us to make sure *el Sueno Americano es para todo*, that we have an education system that sets high standards for all children, demands accountability in our schools, so that we can say with certainty, children from all backgrounds are able to read and write and add and subtract. That is why I believe it is essential that Congress reauthorize the No Child Left Behind Act.

I think it's very important for us to continue to expand Federal contracting opportunities for small businesses and to make sure that America is a place of promise and hope. It is important and essential that Congress pass comprehensive immigration reform that I can sign into law.

I want to talk about another important priority for our country, and that is helping our neighbors to the south of us build a better and productive life. Thursday, Laura and I are going to leave on a trip that will take us to Brazil and Uruguay and Colombia *y Guatemala y por fin, Mexico*. [Laughter] These are countries that are part of a region that has made great strides toward freedom and prosperity. They've raised up new democracies. They've enhanced and undertaken fiscal policies that bring stability.

Yet despite the advances, tens of millions in our hemisphere remain stuck in poverty and shut off from the promises of the new century. My message to those *trabajadores y campesinos* is, you have a friend in the United States of America; we care about your plight.

David, thank you very much for being the chairman of this important organization and for the invitation. I want to thank Michael Barrera, who is the president and CEO of the Hispanic Chamber. I thank my friend *y Tejano* Massey Villarreal, who is with us today. Massey, it's good to see you again. You've got a *barba crecida*. [Laughter] Looking good, though, man. I thank Frank Lopez, who is the president and CEO of Chamber Foundation.

I want to thank members of my Cabinet who have come. I think it's a good sign that